

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ORM-02 DHA-02 AS-01 AID-05 MC-02

IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

/080 W

-----055824 231511Z /46

R 231015Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3536

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 13764

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF TH LA CB

SUBJECT: REPORT OF LAO AND CAMBODIAN REQUEST THAT RTG MOVE
REFUGEE CAMPS

1. JUNE 23 EDITION OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER MORNING EXPRESS CONTAINS ARTICLE STATING THAT INTERIOR MINISTRY SOURCES SAY THAT LAOS AND CAMBODIA HAVE REQUESTED THAT REFUGEE CAMPS LOCATED NEAR THEIR BORDERS BE MOVED FURTHER INLAND. SOURCES REPORTEDLY TOLD EXPRESS THAT LAO AND CAMBODIAN REPS MADE REQUEST BECAUSE REFUGEES SNEAK ACROSS BORDERS AND MAKE TROUBLE FOR LAO AND CAMBODIAN GOVTS THUS OBSTRUCTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THAILAND.

2. MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF EXPRESS STORY WAS TOTALLY UNFOUNDED. THAI AND CAMBODIANS HAVE NOT HELD A MEETING AT ARANYAPRATHET FOR MONTHS. (FOREIGN MINISTER UPPADIT SAID IN A JUNE 19 PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE CAMBODIAN LIAISON OFFICE AT POIPET SEEMS DELIBERATELY TO BE AVOIDING ANY CONTACT WITH THE THAI; NOBODY IN
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POIPET EVEN ANSWERS THE PHONE.) MFA SOURCE ALSO STATED LAO HAD MADE NO SUCH REQUEST AND NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THAILAND MUCH APPRECIATED RECENT RELEASE OF SEVEN THAI CITIZENS HELD IN LAO JAILS, PDRL CONTINUES TO BE VERY DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH. HE CITED NEGOTIATIONS ON RESUMPTION OF BANGKOK-VIENTIANE FLIGHTS AS EXAMPLE OF LAO FOOT-DRAGGING

AND OPINED, "THE LAO HAVEN'T BEEN COMMUNISTS VERY LONG,
BUT THEY CERTAINLY HAVE LEARNED HOW TO NEGOTIATE LIKE
COMMUNISTS."

3. ANOTHER PRESS REPORT IN JUNE 23 BANGKOK WORLD
SAID THAT TWO LAO REFUGEES HAD BEEN ARRESTED WHEN
CAUGHT SMUGGLING ARMS INTO THAILAND. BOTH REFUGEES HAD
REPORTEDLY LEFT THEIR CAMP, AND THE GOVERNOR OF UBON
RATCHATHANI REPORTEDLY COMMENTED THAT MANY REFUGEES
CARRY ON ILLEGAL BUSINESS WITH THE PATHET LAO.

4. COMMENT: INCIDENTS SUCH AS THE ALLEGED ARMS
SMUGGLING CAUSE SOME AMONG THAI OFFICIALDOM, PARTICULARLY
THE GOVERNORS OF BORDER PROVINCES, TO SEE ADVANTAGES
IN MOVING THE REFUGEES FURTHER INLAND. AS THE MFA
OFFICIAL POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, MOVING THE CAMPS WOULD
BE AN EXPENSIVE OPERATION AND ONE WHICH REMAINS
POLITICALLY SENSITIVE IN THAILAND.
WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

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